

## **The Best Way to Prevent Childhood Lead Exposure is to #kNOwLEAD**

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There is no safe level of lead in children.

As lead exposure continues to be an ongoing health challenge, it is important that parents take precautionary measures to keep their children safe and healthy. While exposure can damage a child's learning and development, it can be prevented. The New Jersey Department of Health provides [resources](#) for parents to stay informed so child lead exposure can be avoided.

The Department recently launched our #kNOwLEAD public education campaign, which aims to increase awareness of all lead hazards in homes, schools and on the job, and also educate residents on what they can do to prevent exposure and safeguard their child's health. I encourage everyone to follow our #kNOwLEAD campaign on Facebook and Twitter. The Department kicked off the campaign with a series of events across the state. The education campaign includes outreach about lead exposure and advertising in corner stores and buses.

Lead can disrupt the normal growth and development of a child's brain and central nervous system. While lead paint in homes built before 1978 remains the largest contributor to elevated blood lead levels in children, there are many different lead exposure sources, including water from leaded pipes and imported toys, candy, spices, jewelry, cosmetics, herbal remedies, and pottery.

Parents should ensure their child is tested for lead exposure at a pediatrician's office at ages 1 and 2. For uninsured residents, local health departments and community health centers provide free or low cost testing. Parents can also speak to their local health department about testing paint and dust in homes, especially in houses built before 1978.

The campaign builds on the State's leadership to address childhood lead exposure. New Jersey is one of only 17 states that require universal lead screening of all children at ages 1 and 2. Additionally, the Department of Health is strengthening New Jersey's standard for intervening in cases of potential lead exposure. The Department regulations are being updated to require earlier intervention when lower levels of lead are detected in a child—from 10 micrograms per deciliter of blood to between 5 and 9 micrograms. This change will enable public health officials and medical providers to intervene with education, case management, home visits and other steps, at the earliest possible time.

To learn more, please visit the Department's lead website at [www.nj.gov/health/childhoodlead](http://www.nj.gov/health/childhoodlead), which includes videos in English and Spanish to educate residents about lead exposure and follow the #kNOwLEAD campaign on Facebook and Twitter to get the most current information.